

PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

From the
INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY

To:
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PCT

WRITTEN OPINION OF THE INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY

(PCT Rule 43bis.1)

Date of mailing
(day/month/year)

14 APR 2005

Applicant's or agent's file reference MIC-82-PCT		FOR FURTHER ACTION See paragraph 2 below	
International application No.	International filing date (day/month/year)	Priority date (day/month/year)	
PCT/US04/16338	25 May 2004 (25.05.2004)	30 May 2003 (30.05.2003)	
International Patent Classification (IPC) or both national classification and IPC IPC(7): B29C 047/12, 47/30 and US Cl.: 425/191; 34/386, 387, 398; 159/2.2, 47.1			
Applicant MICHELIN NORTH AMERICA, INC			

1. This opinion contains indications relating to the following items:

- Box No. I Basis of the opinion
- Box No. II Priority
- Box No. III Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability
- Box No. IV Lack of unity of invention
- Box No. V Reasoned statement under Rule 43bis.1(a)(i) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement
- Box No. VI Certain documents cited
- Box No. VII Certain defects in the international application
- Box No. VIII Certain observations on the international application

2. FURTHER ACTION

If a demand for international preliminary examination is made, this opinion will be considered to be a written opinion of the International Preliminary Examining Authority ("IPEA") except that this does not apply where the applicant chooses an Authority other than this one to be the IPEA and the chosen IPEA has notified the International Bureau under Rule 66.1bis(b) that written opinions of this International Searching Authority will not be so considered.

If this opinion is, as provided above, considered to be a written opinion of the IPEA, the applicant is invited to submit to the IPEA a written reply together, where appropriate, with amendments, before the expiration of 3 months from the date of mailing of Form PCT/ISA/220 or before the expiration of 22 months from the priority date, whichever expires later.

For further options, see Form PCT/ISA/220.

3. For further details, see notes to Form PCT/ISA/220.

Name and mailing address of the ISA/ US Mail Stop PCT, Attn: ISA/US Commissioner for Patents P.O. Box 1450 Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450 Facsimile No. (703) 305-3230	Authorized officer Robert B. Davis Telephone No. 571-272-0987
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Form PCT/ISA/237 (cover sheet) (January 2004)

WRITTEN OPINION OF THE
INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY

International application No.

PCT/US04/16338

Box No. I Basis of this opinion

1. With regard to the language, this opinion has been established on the basis of the international application in the language in which it was filed, unless otherwise indicated under this item.

This opinion has been established on the basis of a translation from the original language into the following language _____, which is the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of international search (under Rules 12.3 and 23.1(b)).

2. With regard to any nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence disclosed in the international application and necessary to the claimed invention, this opinion has been established on the basis of:

a. type of material

- a sequence listing
 table(s) related to the sequence listing

b. format of material

- in written format
 in computer readable form

c. time of filing/furnishing

- contained in international application as filed.
 filed together with the international application in computer readable form.
 furnished subsequently to this Authority for the purposes of search.

3. In addition, in the case that more than one version or copy of a sequence listing and/or table relating thereto has been filed or furnished, the required statements that the information in the subsequent or additional copies is identical to that in the application as filed or does not go beyond the application as filed, as appropriate, were furnished.

4. Additional comments:

**WRITTEN OPINION OF THE
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International application No.
PCT/US04/16338

Box No. V Reasoned statement under Rule 43 bis.1(a)(i) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement

1. Statement

Novelty (N)	Claims <u>10, 17</u>	YES
	Claims <u>1-9, 11-16, 18, 20-24</u>	NO
Inventive step (IS)	Claims <u>10, 17</u>	YES
	Claims <u>1-9, 11-16, 18, 20-24</u>	NO
Industrial applicability (IA)	Claims <u>1-18, 20-24</u>	YES
	Claims <u>NONE</u>	NO

2. Citations and explanations:

Claims 1-7, 9, 11-16, 18 and 20-24 lack novelty under PCT Article 33(2) as being anticipated by Burner (3,225,453). Burner teaches an apparatus and a method of drying elastomeric materials. The apparatus comprises an adjustable discharge opening defined by conical surfaces (72) and opposing surface (70) such that the back pressure is adjusted. The reference states that a variable orifice palletizing die at the discharge can be used. This die can be used to control the back pressure and the adjustable die reduces the particle size to permit flashing of any retained vapor (see column 10, lines 29-43). The pressure is adjusted by means of a ring gear (75) which is threadably attached to discharge sleeve (72).

Claims 1-4, 7, 8 and 20-24 lack novelty under PCT Article 33(2) as being anticipated by Speck et al (6,025,004).

Speck et al teach an adjustable extrusion die assembly comprising: an extrusion die (35), a fixed core (167) and a movable component (165) wherein the conical surfaces (195 and 191) of the core and movable component create a back pressure controlling element. The movable component is threadably attached to the die head to allow adjustment of the back pressure. The reference states that the apparatus is used for extrusion of food material; however, as the structure reads on the apparatus elements the intended use of the apparatus is not relevant to the decision regarding the apparatus claims.

Claims 10 and 17 meet the criteria set out in PCT Article 33(2)-(3), because the prior art does not teach or fairly suggest a method for flash drying material using a filter screen with a step of providing a filter screen with a plurality of flash channels and a turbulence channel coupling each of the flash channels.

Claims 1-18 and 20-24 meet the criteria set out in PCT Article 33(4), and thus have industrial applicability because the subject matter claimed can be made or used in industry.

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International application No.

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Box No. VII Certain defects in the international application

The following defects in the form or contents of the international application have been noted:

Claims 20-24 are objected to under PCT Rule 66.2(a)(iii) as containing the following defect(s) in the form or contents thereof: The application does not include a claim 19; therefore, claims 20-24 should be renumbered as 19-23, respectively to avoid confusion.